OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH HAZARD ASSESSMENT

Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment

The mission of the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) is to protect and enhance public health and the environment by objective scientific evaluation of risks posed by hazardous substances.

Consistent with the goals and objectives outlined in Cal/EPA's Strategic Vision, OEHHA provides health assessments and health risk assessment guidelines to Cal/EPA's boards, departments, and offices. OEHHA's accomplishments and priorities for the second half of 2002 concern its scientific investigations and assessments of the health effects of exposures to air pollutants, pesticides, drinking water contaminants, and other hazardous substances. OEHHA also assisted Cal/EPA with promoting environmental justice by providing expertise to Cal/EPA boards and departments to minimize any disproportionate impacts that hazardous substances may have on low-income and minority communities.

Strategic Plan Goals

OEHHA's primary responsibility is to develop scientific information needed to protect human health and the environment. OEHHA is not a "traditional" regulatory agency in that it does not issue permits or enforce laws and regulations. Instead, OEHHA provides State and local agencies with information on the toxicity of hazardous substances. That information is then used in setting standards, enacting regulations, and taking other actions to reduce exposure to toxic substances. OEHHA's accomplishments and priorities reflect its responsibilities and support the following goals established in the 2001 Strategic Plan:

Goal 1: Improve the quality of the public's health and the environment.

Goal 2: Advance the science for the evaluation of risks posed to the public health and environment, and provide risk assessment leadership for the State of California.

Goal 3: Provide quality, useful, and equitable service to the public.

Goal 4: Seek continuous improvement in the effective and efficient use of our internal resources to accomplish our mission.

Children's Environmental Health Protection

Under the Children's Environmental Health Protection Act (SB 25, Escutia, Chapter 731, Statutes of 1999), OEHHA, in conjunction with the Air Resources Board (ARB) has been investigating health effects of chemical contaminants in the air, such as particulate matter (PM) and sulfates, on children's health. Children may have greater exposure than adults to airborne pollutants because they spend more time outdoors and they breathe more rapidly than adults. Children are also more susceptible to

the health effects of air pollution because their immune systems and organs are still developing. As part of these investigations, OEHHA is currently reviewing whether the State's ambient air quality standards are adequate to protect the health of infants and children. OEHHA is also examining contaminants of concern that may be present at school sites. Accomplishments and priorities under this category are linked to the following Cal/EPA Strategic Vision goals:

Goal 1: Air that is healthy to breathe, sustains and improves our ecosystems, and preserves natural and cultural resources.

Goal 5: Reduce or eliminate the disproportionate impacts of pollution on low-income and minority populations.

Goal 7: Continuous improvement and application of science and technology.

Accomplishments

1. **Particulate Matter and Ozone Ambient Air Quality Standards**: OEHHA worked with the Air Resources Board (ARB) to complete comments regarding proposed revisions to the draft report containing ambient air quality standards for PM10 and PM2.5 (particulate matter of 10 and 2.5 microns). ARB adopted the report and the standards in June 2002. These comments were needed to complete the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) process for putting the new air quality standards into effect. OEHHA also initiated a review of scientific literature concerning the health effects of exposure to ozone.

2. **School Site Risk Assessment**: OEHHA developed draft guidelines for conducting multimedia risk assessments at existing and proposed school sites pursuant to Health and Safety Code 901(f)(A) and (C). These guidelines have been posted on the OEHHA Web site for public review and are also undergoing scientific peer review by a panel of University of California faculty members. Also, OEHHA proposed child-specific health values for the first set of five chemicals that OEHHA previously identified to be of concern at school sites, pursuant to Health and Safety Code 901(f)(B) and 901(g). These values identify levels of exposure to these chemicals that would not be expected to pose a health risk to children. A draft report covering this work was issued and is undergoing public review.

3. **East Bay Children's Respiratory Health Study**: OEHHA continued to analyze data from the East Bay Children's Respiratory Health Study to examine the relationship between busy roadways near schools and respiratory symptoms in children.

4. **Statewide Traffic Studies and Children's Respiratory Health**: OEHHA has evaluated the proximity of California schools to roadways. The study indicated that 10 percent of California's schools are near busy roadways (greater than 25,000 vehicles per day) and 2.3 percent are very close to high traffic areas (greater than 50,000 vehicles per day). This data is important in assessing factors in the respiratory health of children.

5. **Risk Assessment Evaluation**: OEHHA continued to evaluate its health risk assessment methods for adequacy in protecting infants and children. This evaluation includes reviewing scientific literature to gain a better understanding of the differences in exposure and response to toxicants by age. The ultimate objective of the evaluation is to develop changes to the risk assessment guidelines used for identifying levels of exposures to toxicants that would not be expected to pose a significant health risk in children. OEHHA anticipates that this evaluation will be completed in late 2004.

Priorities

1. **Criteria Air Pollutants**: OEHHA will complete a review of epidemiological and toxicological literature in preparation for a re-evaluation of the State standard. Ozone was given second highest priority (following particulate matter) during the review and prioritization of the ambient air quality standards under the Children's Environmental Health Protection Act. This work will be submitted to ARB for inclusion in a staff report that will contain recommendations for a revised ambient air quality standard(s) for ozone.

2. **School Site Risk Assessment**: OEHHA staff anticipates that the scientific and public review of the draft guidelines for multimedia risk assessments at existing and proposed school sites will be completed early in 2003. OEHHA then expects to respond to public comments by spring 2003.

3. **Health Values**: OEHHA will submit its health values concerning children's exposure to five chemicals to external peer review as well as public review. OEHHA will respond to these comments and adopt final health values by June 2003.

4. **East Bay Children's Respiratory Health Study**: OEHHA will continue to analyze data from the East Bay Children's Respiratory Health Study to examine the relationship between busy roadways near schools and respiratory symptoms in children.

5. **Statewide Traffic Studies and Children's Respiratory Health**: OEHHA will continue conducting more detailed analyses of the proximity of schools to heavily traveled roads to further examine demographic and socioeconomic trends concerning the exposure of California school children to traffic-related pollutants.

6. **Risk Assessment Evaluation**: OEHHA will continue evaluating its health risk assessment methods for adequacy in protecting infants and children. As part of this effort, OEHHA is constructing a database of cancer cases resulting from exposures to chemicals early in life.

Public Health Goals

The Calderon-Sher California Safe Drinking Water Act of 1996 requires OEHHA to develop "public health goals" (PHG) for chemical contaminants in drinking water. A PHG is the level of a chemical contaminant in drinking water that, based upon currently available data, does not pose a significant

risk to health. State law requires the Department of Health Services (DHS) to set regulatory drinking water standards as close to the corresponding PHGs as is economically and technically feasible.

Accomplishments and priorities under this category are linked to the following Cal/EPA Strategic Vision goal:

Goal 3: Groundwater that is safe for drinking and other beneficial uses.

Accomplishments

1. **PHG for Arsenic, Hexavalent Chromium**: OEHHA completed and arranged a peer review for a draft PHG for arsenic, and continued work on the development of a PHG for hexavalent chromium (chromium VI).

2. **PHGs for 12 Chemicals**: OEHHA has released second-draft PHGs for 12 chemicals. The chemicals are: asbestos, barium, beryllium, chlorobenzene, 1,1-dichloroethane, diethylhexyl adipate, ethylene dibromide, hexachlorobenzene, perchlorate, silvex, 1,1,2,2-tetrachloroethane, and toxaphene. The documents were posted on OEHHA's Web site for a second public comment period in December.

3. **PHGs for Remaining Chemicals**: Initial draft PHG documents on the remaining chemicals with a State maximum contaminant level have been completed. Eleven draft chemical documents and two memoranda on radiation screening standards are presently being internally reviewed.

Priorities

1. **PHG for Arsenic**: After completing internal reviews, OEHHA expects to post the arsenic document for public review during the first half of 2003. Depending on the extent of public comments and responses needed for this chemical, OEHHA expects to complete a PHG for arsenic during the second half of 2003.

2. **PHG for Perchlorate**: OEHHA will arrange for a University of California peer review of the revised perchlorate PHG document, and respond to public comments received during a public comment period. OEHHA anticipates issuing the PHG by late 2003.

3. **PHG for Hexavalent Chromium (Chromium VI)**: OEHHA will continue its investigations of the potential health effects of chromium VI in drinking water, and expects to complete a PHG for the substance by summer 2003.

4. **PHGs for 17 Additional Chemicals and Memoranda on the Radiation Screening Standards**: OEHHA will continue to work on draft PHGs for 17 chemical contaminants in drinking water. The draft memoranda on the screening standards for gross alpha radiation and gross beta radiation are under review.

Environmental Protection Indicators For California (EPIC)

OEHHA is the lead agency for implementing the Environmental Protection Indicators for California (EPIC) project. Through EPIC, environmental indicators were developed to assess the overall health of California's environment and the effectiveness of the State's environmental programs. The project is a collaborative effort of Cal/EPA, the California Resources Agency, DHS, and an external advisory group consisting of representatives from business, public interest groups, academia, and local government.

Accomplishments and priorities under this category are linked to the following Cal/EPA Strategic Vision goal:

Goal 8: An efficient and effective Cal/EPA in pursuit of its mission.

Accomplishments

1. **Communication and Outreach**: OEHHA made a number of presentations on the EPIC project at various meetings and conferences, including: the California and the World Oceans Conference; the fall semiannual meeting of the California Conference of Directors of Environmental Health and the California Conference of Local Health Officers; the meeting of the California Environmental Health Tracking Expert Working Group; the Department of Toxic Substances Control Leadership Academy; and a workshop sponsored by the Multi-State Work Group and the Council of State Governments.

Priorities

1. **Improve and Update Environmental Indicator System**: OEHHA will continue to work with the Cal/EPA boards and departments, the Resources Agency, DHS, and other entities to improve and update the environmental indicators. OEHHA will explore the feasibility of presenting certain indicators using a geographic information system platform. The next update is scheduled for 2004.

2. **Integrate Environmental Indicators Into Cal/EPA Planning Process**: OEHHA will continue to work with the Cal/EPA Office of the Secretary and the agency's boards and departments to develop mechanisms for integrating environmental indicators into the agency's planning and decision-making processes.

Air Toxics Hot Spots Program

Health and Safety Code Section 44300 (the Air Toxics Hot Spots Information and Assessment Act) mandates OEHHA to develop guidelines for assessing health risks posed by major California facilities that emit air toxins.

Accomplishments and priorities under this category are linked to the following Cal/EPA Strategic Vision goal:

Goal 1: Air that is healthy to breathe, sustains and improves our ecosystems, and preserves natural and cultural resources.

Accomplishments

1. **Reference Exposure Levels**: OEHHA submitted proposed chronic reference exposure levels (REL) for fluorides, phosphine, and triethylamine to the Scientific Review Panel on Toxic Air Contaminants (SRP) for review. The RELs for phosphine and triethylamine were approved and adopted for the Air Toxics Hot Spots program. OEHHA has also revised the draft chronic REL for crystalline silica pursuant to internal Cal/EPA and management review. A chronic REL is an airborne level of a contaminant that would pose no significant health risk to individuals indefinitely exposed to that chemical at that level. The RELs reflect considerations of potential health impacts on infants and children as required by the Children's Environmental Health Protection Act.

2. **Guidance Manual**: OEHHA, in cooperation with ARB, released the draft "Air Toxics Hot Spots Guidance Manual for Preparation of Risk Assessments" for public review. The document condenses information from the four technical support documents adopted for use in conducting health risk assessments for the Air Toxics Hot Spots program. The guidance manual will be used by local air quality management districts and air pollution control districts as well as by the facilities conducting risk assessments. OEHHA worked with ARB to finalize the manual, which was subsequently approved by the SRP.

3. **Health Risk Assessment Review**: OEHHA continued to review health risk assessments submitted by the air districts under the Air Toxics Hot Spots program.

Priorities

1. **Reference Exposure Levels**: OEHHA will continue to work with the SRP on approval and adoption of the chronic REL for fluorides. In addition, OEHHA will work toward finalizing the chronic REL for crystalline silica of 10 microns or less following SRP review.

2. **Health Risk Assessment Review**: OEHHA will continue to review health risk assessments submitted by the air districts under the Air Toxics Hot Spots program.

Toxic Air Contaminant Program

OEHHA performs risk assessments of substances that are candidates for regulation by ARB under the Toxic Air Contaminant Identification and Control Act.

Accomplishments and priorities under this category are linked to the following Cal/EPA Strategic Vision goal:

Goal 1: Air that is healthy to breathe, sustains and improves our ecosystems, and preserves natural and cultural resources.

Accomplishments

1. **Environmental Tobacco Smoke**: OEHHA drafted a revision to the report, "Health Effects of Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS)," which was first prepared in 1997. OEHHA is updating the document to provide a complete and current assessment of the health effects of environmental tobacco smoke for consideration by ARB, which has proposed the identification of environmental tobacco smoke as a toxic air contaminant. The draft is undergoing internal review and the revisions focus attention on the health effects of ETS on children.

2. **Dioxin Toxicity Equivalency Quotient (TEQ)**: OEHHA prepared a document updating the toxic equivalents factors for dioxin-like compounds, which has undergone management review. OEHHA described the current TEQ and is now proposing to use the TEQ developed by the World Health Organization for the Air Toxics Hot Spots program.

Priorities

1. **Environmental Tobacco Smoke**: OEHHA will complete the update of the report, "Health Effects of Environmental Tobacco Smoke." Following management review, the document will undergo peer review and public review in 2003.

2. **Dioxin TEQ**: OEHHA will finalize the dioxin TEQ document, release the document for public comment, and bring it before the SRP for review and approval. The document will then be incorporated into the Air Toxics Hot Spots risk assessment guidelines.

Health Risk Assessments for Chemical Contaminants in the Environment

OEHHA's health risk assessments and the guidance that OEHHA provides to State and local agencies often form the basis for regulatory actions that reduce the public's exposure to hazardous contaminants.

Accomplishments and priorities under this category are linked to the following Cal/EPA Strategic Vision goals:

Goal 3: Groundwater that is safe for drinking and other beneficial uses.

Goal 4: Communities that are free from unacceptable human health and ecological risks due to exposure from hazardous substances and other potential harmful agents.

Goal 6: Ensure the efficient use of natural resources.

Accomplishments

1. Fuels Multimedia Impact Assessment Program: OEHHA continued work on a draft technical support document on the potential adverse health effects of reformulated fuels.

Pesticide Exposure Training, Risk Assessments, and Field Investigations

OEHHA trains physicians in treating pesticide poisonings, advises local health officers on pesticide-related illnesses, and assists in the development of pesticide worker-safety regulations.

Accomplishments and priorities under this category are linked to the following Cal/EPA Strategic Vision goals:

Goal 4: Communities that are free from unacceptable human health and ecological risks due to exposure from hazardous substances and other potential harmful agents.

Goal 5: Reduce or eliminate the disproportionate impacts of pollution on low-income and minority populations.

Accomplishments

1. **Pesticide-Illness Recognition Training**: OEHHA staff provided training in pesticide poisoning recognition and management at a conference at the UC Davis. OEHHA also provided training to physicians and medical personnel at hospitals in the cities of Stockton and Merced, and in Fresno County.

2. **Pesticide Exposure Field Investigations**: Staff analyzed data from a follow-up survey of possible long-term health ailments among Earlimart (Tulare County) residents who were accidentally exposed to metam sodium in 1999.

3. **Technical Expertise for Pesticide Regulations**: OEHHA participated as a charter member of the worker safety regulation work group of the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR). The group is currently working on regulations for the use of respirators by pesticide applicators. OEHHA also provided comments to DPR on worker exposure protocols for four pesticides: chloropicrin, cyfluthrin, malathion, and iodine.

4. **Peer Review**: Staff reviewed and submitted comments to DPR on their draft pesticide risk assessments for the chlorpyrifos toxic air contaminant document, methyl bromide aggregate risk characterization document, and azinphos-methyl risk characterization document.

5. **Health Risk Assessments**: OEHHA prepared findings on the health effects of the pesticide active ingredient chlorpyrifos and submitted the draft findings to the SRP.

6. **Guidelines for Cholinesterase-Inhibiting Chemicals**: OEHHA, in collaboration with DPR, developed technical discussions and drafted written guidance for conducting risk evaluations of chemicals that inhibit cholinesterase activity.

Priorities

1. **Guidelines for Cholinesterase-Inhibiting Chemicals**: OEHHA will work with DPR to continue developing guidance for conducting risk evaluations of chemicals that inhibit cholinesterase.

2. **Peer Review**: Staff will submit comments on DPR's draft risk characterization documents for metam sodium, methylisothiocyanante, and methidathion.

Fish Consumption Advisories

OEHHA assesses risks from chemical contaminants in sport fish and issues fish consumption advisories, which provide the public with recommended limits for the consumption of fish species in specific locations that may contain elevated levels of methylmercury and other contaminants.

Accomplishments and priorities under this category are linked to the following Cal/EPA Strategic Vision goal:

Goal 2: Rivers, lakes, estuaries, and marine waters that are fishable and swimmable, and support healthy ecosystems and other beneficial uses.

Accomplishments

1. **Fish Consumption Advisories**: OEHHA provided technical support to the Trinity County Department of Environmental Health in developing an interim county fish consumption advisory for Trinity Lake based on data from the U.S. Geological Service. To obtain the additional analytical results needed to develop a comprehensive State advisory, OEHHA staff assisted in the sampling of fish from Trinity Lake. Staff also continued to work on a draft report for fish consumption in San Pablo Reservoir (Contra Costa County) and Black Butte Reservoir (Glenn and Tehama Counties), and fish assessments in Tomales Bay, the San Francisco Bay Delta, and other water bodies.

2. **Technical Expertise on Chemical Contaminants in Fish**: OEHHA staff provided technical support to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and several regional water quality boards for the following projects: a site evaluation and cleanup in San Diego Bay, the Lake Oroville dam re-licensing environmental impact assessment report; and the toxic substances monitoring program collection and analysis in lakes and reservoirs in the Bay Area, the North Coast, and Humboldt/Arcata Bay. OEHHA staff also provided technical support to DHS concerning dioxin/furan contamination in commercial oysters from Humboldt/Arcata Bay. OEHHA assisted U.S. EPA on its institutional control plan for the Palos Verdes Shelf Superfund site and the Montrose Settlements trustees in a restoration project surrounding the Palos Verdes Shelf Superfund site. OEHHA staff also analyzed the first two years of fish contamination data from the coastal fish contamination program and presented the summary at the California and the World Ocean 2002 conference.

3. **Environmental Justice and Public Communication**: OEHHA staff served on a number of regional groups of agency- and community-based organizations working to promote better communication about chemical contamination in fish. OEHHA provided technical support to the following: the Delta fish consumption task force, the San Francisco Bay fish consumption task force, the U.S. EPA technical advisory committee for revising risk communication guidance for fish advisories; and the fish contamination education program (Los Angeles and Orange counties), which produced a multilanguage brochure with information about chemical contamination and fish consumption advice.

Priorities

1. **Fish Consumption Advisories**: OEHHA will complete a draft report and consumption advisories for water bodies in the Bear and Yuba River watersheds (Placer, Nevada, and Yuba counties) in the spring of 2003. OEHHA will continue to work on draft reports and advisories for the San Pablo Reservoir (Contra Costa County), marine waters in Santa Monica and San Pedro Bay (Los Angeles County), and the Orange County coast. OEHHA will also revise the report and advisory for the Black Butte Reservoir (Glenn and Tehama counties) and begin drafting a report to update the advisory for San Francisco Bay. OEHHA will continue ongoing assessments of contaminated fish in Tomales Bay, the Delta, and Trinity Lake, where additional data are being collected.

2. **Technical Expertise on Chemical Contaminants in Fish**: OEHHA will continue to provide technical support to the SWRCB and regional boards for assessments of fish in Lake Oroville, San Diego, Humboldt Bay, and other water bodies. OEHHA will also continue to provide technical support to the U.S. EPA and Montrose Trustees for cleanup and restoration projects surrounding the Palos Verdes Superfund site.

California-Baja California Border Environmental Program

OEHHA is participating in the California-Baja California border environmental program, which involves the work of various State and local agencies in California and Mexico that are addressing air and water pollution, hazardous waste contamination, and other environmental problems in the border region.

Accomplishments and priorities under this category are linked to the following Cal/EPA Strategic Vision goal:

Goal 5: Reduce or eliminate the disproportionate impacts of pollution on low-income and minority populations.

Accomplishments

1. **Training in Toxicology and Risk Assessment**: OEHHA staff conducted training for approximately 50 promotoras (lay community health educators) in lead poisoning prevention.

Two trainings were performed in conjunction with Fuerza Campesina in El Centro (Imperial County) and Project Concern International in Chula Vista (San Diego County).

2. **Joint Study of Lead Exposure**: OEHHA and DHS continued to analyze samples of Mexican candies for sale on the California-Baja California border and confirmed that lead contamination continues to be present in certain candies and candy wrappers. OEHHA has participated in discussions with DHS and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration regarding a systematic approach to resolving this problem.

3. **Support for Imperial/Mexicali Clean Air Stakeholders Group**: The program obtained funding from U.S. EPA Region 9 for a study entitled "Collection and Analysis of Respiratory Illness Data in Imperial County and the Municipality of Mexicali." The lead on the study will be Dr. Marco Antonio Reyna of the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, who heads the health work group of the stakeholders group.

Priorities

1. **Training in Toxicology and Risk Assessment**: Staff will continue to conduct training of Mexican colleagues in toxicology and risk assessment.

2. **Joint Study of Lead Exposure**: Staff will continue collaborating with the Baja California Health Department on the Tijuana childhood lead exposure study.

3. **Fish Consumption Advisory**: The program will investigate the feasibility of testing fish in the New River to support the development of a fish advisory.

4. **Imperial/Mexicali Clean Air Stakeholders Group**: OEHHA's border coordinator will assist in the study entitled "Collection and Analysis of Respiratory Illness Data in Imperial County and the Municipality of Mexicali." OEHHA will also seek additional outside funding to expand the program by adding an environmental health educator.

Proposition 65

Proposition 65, officially known as The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, requires the publication and updating of a list of chemicals that are known to the State of California to cause cancer, birth defects, or other reproductive harm. OEHHA is responsible for administering the Proposition 65 program.

Accomplishments and priorities under this category are linked to the following Cal/EPA Strategic Vision goals:

Goal 4: Communities that are free from unacceptable human health and ecological risks due to exposure from hazardous substances and other potential harmful agents.

Goal 7: Continuous improvement and application of science and technology.

Accomplishments

1. **Safe Harbor Levels**: OEHHA released draft "safe harbor levels" for 16 chemicals on the Proposition 65 list. Safe harbor levels identify levels of exposures to chemicals listed under Proposition 65 that do not require businesses to provide warnings. The 16 chemicals are: benzofuran, N-carboxymethyl-N-nitrosourea, 3,3'-dimethoxybenzidine, 3,3'-dimethoxybenzidine dihydrochloride, 3,3'-dimethylbenzidine, 3,3'-demethylbenzidine dihydrochloride, 2-methylaziridine (propyleneimine), phenyl glycidyl ether, tetranitromethane, 2,6-xylidine, p-chloro-o-toluidine hydrochloride, isobutyl nitrite, nalidixic acid, o-phenylenediamine, o-phenylenediamine dihydrochloride, and linuron.

2. **Developmental and Reproductive Toxicant (DART) Committee**: The DART committee met to consider the listing of diuron and the de-listing of bromacil lithium salt. The committee determined that diuron had not been clearly shown to cause reproductive toxicity, and therefore, should not be added to the Proposition 65 list. The committee also determined that bromacil lithium salt should remain on the Proposition 65 chemical list as known to cause developmental toxicity and in addition should be listed as known to cause male reproductive toxicity. The committee designated as an authoritative body the National Toxicology Program (NTP) with regard to final documents released by NTP's Center for Evaluation of Risks to Human Reproduction.

3. **Carcinogen Identification Committee (CIC)**: The CIC met to consider the listing of phenelzine and its acid salts and the de-listing of sodium saccharin. The committee determined that phenelzine had not been clearly shown to cause cancer and declined to add the chemical to the Proposition 65 list. The committee also decided to remove sodium saccharin from the Proposition 65 list. In addition, the committee recommended that OEHHA develop individual hazard identification documents for each of the cholesterol-lowering statin drugs and to present the documents at a future CIC meeting. The CIC at that time would decide upon the addition of individual statin drugs to the Proposition 65 list.

4. **Clear and Reasonable Warning Regulation**: OEHHA adopted a regulation concerning the providing of Proposition 65 warnings during emergency medical and dental care. The regulation states that the accepted practice of obtaining a patient's informed consent for emergency medical or dental treatment will be deemed to comply with the Proposition 65 warning requirement.

5. **Safe Use Determinations (SUD)**: OEHHA held a public hearing on a proposed regulation that would make changes to OEHHA's rules and procedures for considering SUD applications from businesses. An SUD is an advisory opinion issued by OEHHA concerning the use of a product containing a chemical listed under Proposition 65 that would not pose a risk to the public and, therefore, would not require a warning. An SUD can also help a business determine whether a discharge of the chemical into a drinking water source would be prohibited under Proposition 65. OEHHA is reviewing comments prior to issuing a final regulation.

6. **Additions to Proposition 65 List**: OEHHA issued a notice of intent to list strong inorganic mists containing sulfuric acid under the "authoritative bodies" mechanism. OEHHA is reviewing comments received during the public comment period on this notice.

7. **Random Selection of Chemicals**: OEHHA is working on the prioritization of 50 chemicals that were randomly selected for further evaluation for possible listing as carcinogens under Proposition 65. Each of the 50 chemicals will be screened for cancer potential, based on a review of the available scientific literature, and will be prioritized. Chemicals with highest priority will ultimately be reviewed by the CIC.

Priorities

1. **Safe Harbor Levels**: OEHHA will adopt "safe harbor levels" into regulation for 16 chemicals on the Proposition 65 list. OEHHA will propose draft safe harbor levels for an additional 12 chemicals.

2. **Additions to Proposition 65 List**: OEHHA will consider the listing of as many as four chemicals under the "authoritative bodies" and "formally required to be labeled" listing mechanisms.

3. **Random Selection of Chemicals**: OEHHA will prioritize the 50 chemicals that were randomly selected for further evaluation for possible listing as carcinogens under Proposition 65.

4. **Safe Use Determinations**: OEHHA expects to finalize and adopt a regulation making changes to OEHHA's processes and procedures for handling SUD applications.

5. **Naturally Occurring Chemicals in Food Regulations**: OEHHA will hold a public workshop to solicit input on proposed amendments to the regulation that would clarify exposures to naturally occurring chemicals in food that are exempt from Proposition 65 warning requirements.

Registered Environmental Assessor Program

The registered environmental assessor (REA) program certifies and maintains a directory of environmental professionals who are highly qualified to conduct environmental site assessments, oversee site cleanups, perform compliance audits, prepare waste reduction plans, and handle other kinds of environmental work. Pursuant to the enactment of SB 1011 (Sher, Chapter 626, Statutes of 2002), the REA program was transferred from OEHHA to the Department of Toxic Substances Control effective January 1, 2003.

Accomplishments and priorities under this category are linked to the following Cal/EPA Strategic Vision goal:

Goal 4: Communities that are free from unacceptable human health and ecological risks due to exposure from hazardous substances and other potential harmful agents.

Accomplishments

1. **Registration**: The REA program registered 90 new environmental assessors and evaluated more than 400 renewal and reinstatement applications from current and previously registered individuals.

2. **Transfer of REA Program**: The REA program worked closely with DTSC management and information technology operations to ensure a smooth transfer of the program from OEHHA to DTSC effective January 1, 2003.

3. **Geology Work Group**: The REA program continued to coordinate the activities of a Cal/EPA work group to evaluate the activities within Cal/EPA that may constitute the practice of geology. The work group is currently drafting a report for Cal/EPA's review.

Other Accomplishments

Accomplishments and priorities under this category are linked to all eight of the Cal/EPA Strategic Vision goals.

1. **Emergency Response for Biological and Chemical Terrorism**: The State is preparing emergency response plans in the event of terrorist attacks using biological and chemical weapons. OEHHA participated in an interagency committee on biological and chemical terrorism that is evaluating the State's preparedness in the event of such attacks and is developing recommendations for further preparedness for emergency response teams.

2. **Clandestine Drug Lab Program**: OEHHA completed technical support documents reviewing the toxicity of eight chemicals used in clandestine synthesis of methamphetamine. The first fact sheet was completed at the end of December.

3. **Risk-Based Screening Levels (RBSL)**: Staff coordinated with the DTSC and the SWRCB to compile a list of 54 chemicals for which RBSLs have been developed. These RBSLs are undergoing peer review by the University of California pursuant to SB 32 (Escutia, Chapter 764, Statutes of 2001). RBSLs are levels of a chemical in soil that do not pose a significant health risk to humans exposed to the chemical.

4. **Emerging Environmental Challenges**: An informal workshop was convened to explore ways in which risk assessors can provide appropriate information to assist risk managers in cases when available scientific data are inadequate for a complete risk assessment. The workshop used pharmaceuticals and other "non-traditional" chemicals in the environment as case studies. The ideas from this workshop were incorporated into a presentation that was delivered by OEHHA staff at a workshop sponsored by the Association of California Water Agencies.

Other Priorities

1. **Clandestine Drug Lab Program**: OEHHA will complete an additional four draft fact sheets on chemicals found at sites used as clandestine drug (methamphetamine) manufacturing labs.

2. **Polybrominated Diphenylethers (PBDE)**: OEHHA is making presentations at scientific conferences on a class of chemicals widely used as flame retardants that persist in the environment. The presentations also cover acrylamide, a carcinogen ubiquitous in food. OEHHA will continue to monitor scientific research concerning the toxicity and prevalence of PBDEs.